



TOWN OF DURHAM
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2022-2023 Council Goals
WORKING DRAFT #9 - 5-13-2022

Mission

To provide ongoing stewardship for the Durham community that ensures effective and efficient municipal services reflective of our commitment to long-term economic, environmental, and social resiliency, and for the intertwined amenities, resources, history, and culture inherent in this university town rich in natural resources.

Core Values

- Embrace openness in the transaction of public business while conducting Town affairs in a manner that is just and best demonstrates a genuine respect for different ideas, opinions, and perspectives.
- Integrity.
- Excellence in all endeavors.
- Resilience.

Action Goals

(Note: These goals are intended to convey a 1- to 3-year time horizon and assume but do not list all baseline activities.)

Ensure smooth and, to the extent possible, transparent functioning of Town government.

- Work toward providing municipal e-mail addresses for Town Councilors and board/commission Chairs.

Continue monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic using information available from state and Federal agencies.

- Convey timely information to the community as appropriate.
- Ensure the Town has an adequate supply of Personal Protection Equipment for its emergency services and Town staff.

Conduct planning necessary to protect public health and safety and provide ongoing service continuity given the anticipated impacts of climate change and other trends.

- Update Fire Department Strategic Plan and continue to plan for future fire department facility needs, including a new station on Water Works Road, and

evaluate opportunities with surrounding communities regarding the potential for shared services as appropriate.

- Move forward with the Land and Mobile Radio (LMR) emergency communications upgrade to municipal infrastructure.
- Move forward with emergency generator enhancements for critical infrastructure.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate the reliability, capacity, and functionality of public water, wastewater, and stormwater services, and move ahead with associated capital initiatives as appropriate.
- Update land use and other regulations as necessary to ensure local resilience associated with climate change.
- Take steps as necessary to ensure Durham’s IT infrastructure remains secure from cybersecurity threats and other challenges.

Pursue long-term economic sustainability and resiliency, anticipating the community’s, the region’s, and the nation’s economic characteristics and opportunities.

- Task the Administrator with meeting the following budget goals for 2023. Hold the municipal tax rate at the 2022 level or less. For the medium and long-term, the Town will continue to make an effort to control its spending, broaden the tax base, and explore innovative ways to stabilize or reduce the municipal tax rate.
- Work to secure available external grant funding opportunities to address local and regional priorities and mitigate the short and long-term cost of municipal service delivery.
- Support as appropriate the efforts of local businesses, the Durham Business Association, and Celebrate Durham as they plan and host events and activities intended to maintain and enhance a vibrant downtown Durham.
- Pursue opportunities to broaden the tax base that are consistent with Council goals and with the Town’s operational and long-term fiscal health.
- Start to develop a plan for the re-development of 66 Main Street.
- Continue to work toward defining and addressing downtown parking challenges to support local businesses, the diversification of downtown housing opportunities, and the expansion of the tax base.

Pursue long-term environmental sustainability and resiliency taking into account existing and predicted impacts of climate change in multiple areas including drinking water, agriculture, food, society, transportation, ecology, and economy.

- Take steps that reflect Durham’s commitment to the mission of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCOM), to include the development of a Climate Action Plan (CAP) to reduce Durham greenhouse gas emissions 68 million pounds (35.5%) by 2030, enabling Durham to be more resilient in the face of anticipated impacts associated with climate change.
- Support efforts of the Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee, Agricultural Commission, and Public Works to increase composting and reduce municipal solid waste landfill use and Durham’s carbon footprint.

- Adopt a solar ordinance updated to more effectively govern the placement of solar panels that supports a range of community priorities.
- Support ongoing improvement of pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and access to public transportation.
- Work toward the removal of the Mill Pond Dam on the Oyster River, including engineering plans and pursuit of external funding, and through community input and outreach, plan for the use of the resulting public open space to incorporate opportunities for gathering and recreation as well as recognition of the location's deep historical significance in the pre-Colonial, Colonial, and Modern eras.
- Support local and regional efforts to promote and improve the long-term health of the Great Bay Watershed, including its tributaries and surrounding catchment areas.
- Continue to support the proactive stewardship of Town-owned lands and other lands in Durham held in conservation or under easement with nonprofit organizations while improving appropriate and sustainable public access and use of those lands.

Pursue long-term social resiliency.

- Strengthen the community by supporting the needs of residents, families, and other identified stakeholders by offering a wide array of active and passive parks & recreation and library opportunities, programming, events, and facilities.
- Continue to work to preserve the health and vitality of Durham's neighborhoods.
- Explore regulatory strategies to buffer the transition from the downtown commercial core to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Support efforts to investigate opportunities, challenges, and options to ensure the availability of a full range of housing types in Durham.
- Continue developing plans for the rehabilitation of both the Old Town Hall/Courthouse and the Bickford-Chesley House at Wagon Hill Farm.
- Support initiatives that welcome diversity, equity, and inclusion within our community.

Continue cooperative and collaborative efforts with UNH to enhance mutual intellectual, cultural, environmental, social, and economic benefits associated with hosting New Hampshire's flagship state university.

Leverage town committees and subcommittees to develop tactical plans to align with the broader goals of the Council, and encourage them to collaborate with each other and communicate as necessary with the community at large.

** Note that the order of the goals does not imply priority.*